expenditure incurred on advertisements and publicity has been Rs. 8.23 crores, Rs. 9.69 crores and Rs. 17.67 crores respectively.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Advertisements do help in maintaining and further increasing the level of sales of steel and also serve other important objectives like building brand equity, resource mobilisation, increase in productivity etc. having regard to the increasingly competitive environment in which SAIL is operating. SAIL also requires to raise substantial additional resources from the market for funding its capital requirements, particularly since it does not receive any budgetary support from the Government. Advertisement campaigns help SAIL in maintaining and increasing its market share as well as building an image with its customers, general public and investors. An enlarged investor base is required for borrowing funds, especially since funds from conventional sources are now more difficult to obtain. Thus public deposits have increased by Rs. 525 crores from 1993-94 to 1995-96, and stand at Rs. 1653 crores as on 31/03/1996. Between 1993-94 and 1995-96 the production (Saleable Steel) increased by about 0.65 Million Tonnes (from 8.5 MT to 9.15 MT); total sales by about Rs. 3039 crores (from Rs. 11671 crores to Rs. 14710 crores); and expenditure on advertisement and publicity increased by about Rs. 9.44 crores (from Rs. 8.33 crores to Rs. 17.67 crores).

[English]

Shipbreaking Industry

5352. SHRI SANAT MEHTA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) the position of Shipbreaking Industry in the country among the countries where shipbreaking activity is undertaken;

(b) whether fall in the shipbreaking at Alang has been noticed by the Government during 1995-96;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) As per available information, India has ranked first for the past two years among the countries where shipbreaking activity is undertaken.

(b) and (c) According to Government of Gujarat, the number of ships broken at Alang during 1995-96 as against 1994-95 has been as under :

Year	Number of ships broken	Light Displacement Tonnes (LDT) (in lakh tonnes)
1994-95	301	21.7
1995-96	183	12.5

(d) The major reasons for fall in shipbreaking at Alang during 1995-96 are as under :—

1. Fall in the value of rupee against US Dollar, and

2. Recession in the scrap market.

VRS Scheme

5353. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Voluntary Retirement Scheme has been introduced for employees in Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited;

(b) if so, the number of employees who have opted it upto March 1996;

(c) whether any modifications have been made in the matter of payment of 3 months salary for each completed year of service instead of $1^1/_2$ months salary for each completed year of service applicable to the employees governed by this scheme;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the financial implications involved in the aforesaid scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, based on the guidelines issued by the Department of Public Enterprises a scheme of Voluntary Retirement has been introduced in Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited from January, 1992. The number of employees who have taken voluntary retirement under this scheme upto March, 1996 is 433.

(a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(e) According to available information an amount of Rs. 6.50 crores have been provided to BCPL from NRF to meet the cost of the existing VRS.

Construction of Pilgrim Rest House at Nemawar

5354. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government had sanctioned the construction of a pilgrim rest-house at Nemawar in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details and the latest position of the said construction work at the sanctioned project;